

Recycling and Refuse Management Committee Minutes from 7/9/09 meeting

Draft-not yet approved

Present: Meg Vickery, Chair; Susan Waite, DPW Liaison; Sterling Bush; Marianne Lorenzelli; Greg Keochakian; Lucy McMurrer.

June minutes approved with changes as discussed in meeting.

Quick News

Susan mentioned four brief news items:

- A newly built, super energy-efficient Montague home is having an open house from 4-7 tonight.
- Larry Shaffer sent letters stating both Meg Vickery and Lucy McMurrer have been reappointed to the Committee.
- Article passed out re: San Francisco now mandates recycling and composting, city-wide.
- Recently amended Town Appointment Committee Handbook distributed to committee.

Transfer Station Update

Sterling expressed frustration that the sign she made to encourage donations for a new Book Shed roof were taken down last weekend because of Guilford's concerns about lack of supervision of collected cash and checks. She thought it had all been arranged and believed that Susan had received Guilford's approval for the project. In addition, the June minutes did not reflect all of the discussion about the project. Susan said that the poster did not make it around to her at the June meeting, and she did not identify the need to get Guilford's approval. Guilford's approval had been received for only the deposit collection portion of the project. According to an email Susan received, he is OK with cash donations (via check made out to "TOA-Transfer Station Book Shed Roof") being sent *directly to the DPW office*. Sterling had never agreed to pursue the deposit collection project, and Susan (and others?) assumed she had.

Resolution:

- Susan will find a way to adjust Sterling's donation thermometer sign so that it will work with the newly understood process and will reflect the deposit collection program.
- Greg volunteered to redeem the cans weekly. Susan will work out the program with Steve, Guilford and Greg and will notify the Food Bank that we will be temporarily collecting can donations to raise money for the Book Shed roof.
- The June minutes should be amended to state "Sterling passed around a draft of the donation collection poster and asked for improvement suggestions. The donation thermometer will be posted at the Transfer Station along with envelopes addressed to the Amherst DPW for book shed check donations."
- In the future, the person distributing minutes should write "DRAFT – NOT APPROVED" on the front page of all RRMC meeting minutes which have not gained committee approval.
- Meeting facilitators at future meetings may take extra care to begin new topics only when the previous one has been concluded & agreed upon by all members.

Sterling said that simply turning the book shed 90° and putting the door on the side might solve the snow drift problem. Greg suggested speaking with Peter Jessop of Integrity Builders to see if they'd volunteer to do it for the town. Susan said she'd discuss this with Guilford. An entirely new book shed would mean new permits and that could be challenging.

Susan's Leave of Absence (Aug-Dec 2009)

Susan has some loose ends she would like to discuss before she begins her leave of absence. She would like to have a contact person for each issue on paper in case questions arise.

- Waste Hauler Licensure to be worked out with the Board of Health by Nancy or Cheryl.
- Meeting Coordination (includes notifying Nancy Murphy (murphyn@amherstma.gov) of meetings and agenda at least one week in advance, and sending her minutes for distribution to Guilford, Susan, Steve, and Maryanne) will be Meg and Lucy. We should try to have Guilford at the August meeting.
- School Composting (touching base with custodians at Marks Meadow and Wildwood in the fall, as well as Ricci Mastroianni at Crocker Farm) will be Meg.
- Amherst Chamber of Commerce Green Subcommittee will be Greg.
- Green Event 2010 will be Meg.
- Styrofoam Ban will be Lucy.

- Renewable Energy Fair will be skipped this fall.
- Book Shed Project will be Sterling.

Board of Health Regulation Changes

On July 16 at 7:15 p.m. Susan will meet with the Board of Health to discuss proposed changes to BOH regulations about Amherst waste hauling. Susan would like a RRMC member to come to help summarize the changes proposed, discuss why the RRMC would like to see them implemented, and answer any questions. Guilford made one change to the committee's changes, regarding reimbursement of town for expenses incurred for clean-up, etc. The catalyst for these regulation changes was to ensure that commercial haulers must offer both types of recycling to commercial businesses *and* residences. If these changes go through, Susan will draft a letter to waste haulers, property managers, and landlords in Amherst, notifying them about the changes.

Styrofoam Ban Update

Susan distributed a handout of Amherst restaurants and food handlers, so the Committee can review the list and identify allies and challengers. She also spoke with Aaron Hayden who said that the Select Board has been notified that we're working on this. He said to notify Stephanie O'Keefe when we are ready to move forward. Susan spoke with Kimberly at Cushman's Market about their use of eco-friendly cups and plates. Kimberly said the cost difference between compostable cups and Styrofoam was about \$100/year. They choose to use compostable cups because it is morally the right thing to do, but also because their customers are pleased and feel good about it... "customer satisfaction is key." She said that Woodstar Café in Northampton and Esselon Café in Hadley are also using eco-friendly cups. Lucy spoke with Adrie Lester of Wheatberry Café and Adrie gave a price listing. For a case of 1000 16 oz. coffee cups, the cost is \$119 for compostable, \$75 for plastic-lined paper, and \$41 for Styrofoam. The health ramifications of Styrofoam use was brought up. Susan suggested Lucy ask Adrie what she knows and refer to the King County, WA expanded polystyrene handout from last month's meeting for more information. Guilford suggests that we write up a brief paragraph explaining the ban and the logic behind it. Greg is our committee's liaison to the Chamber of Commerce's Green Subcommittee: at what point should we involve them in the expanded polystyrene discussion?

Committee Membership Recruitment

We are still short one member of the committee. Lucy will send an email to Ricci Mastroianni asking if she might be interested in joining. Perhaps a member of the Chamber of Commerce's green subcommittee? Maybe we need to have another contest and publicize it, similar to what Hwei-Ling Greeney did when Lucy joined.

New Business

- Meg would like to step down as chair of the committee at some point in the near future. Lucy, also, would like to step down as secretary. If anyone is interested in either position, please speak up.
- Pedal People, the group that who collects trash and recycling in downtown Northampton, has expressed an interest in doing business in Amherst. Susan will talk with Guilford about this.
- Amherst Farmer's Supply (AFS) contacted Susan about recycling wood pellet bags. Susan found out that TREX, the primary consumer of recycled plastic bags, will test bags to see if they can be used in plastic lumber production (they cannot have a poly/nylon lining). Bag samples of the pellet brands AFS sells will be sent for testing. Pending the results of the tests, AFS has interest in starting a pellet bag recycling program.
- Susan wrote the grant report for the recycling trailer. Guilford said the focus for now will be on event recycling on the Common. Susan will work on revising the Common permit to explain the new options for trash/recycling removal. Toters (for use with the trailer) and event recycling bins were purchased with some extra grant money. The bins will be available for rental to groups using the Common for events.
- Greg asked if the Town of Amherst wanted to look into deposit collection of water and juice bottles should the revised bottle bill pass. It could be a source of revenue for the Town.

Next committee meeting scheduled for the first Thursday of August, the 6th at 4:30. We're really hopeful Susan will be there!!

Meeting adjourned 6:15 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Lucy McMurrer